

**IN THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, in this application.

1. (previously presented) A staple oligonucleotide of SEQ ID NO: 1 which is a single-stranded oligonucleotide comprising a 5'-end sequence, an intermediate sequence and a 3'-end sequence, the 5'-end sequence having a reverse complementarity with the intermediate sequence, the 3'-end sequence having a reverse complementarity with the intermediate sequence and the intermediate sequence having loops at both ends, and the loops not forming a complementary bond intermolecularly.

Claims 2-8 (canceled)

9. (previously presented) The staple oligonucleotide according to claim 1, whose phosphate groups are not phosphorothioated.

Claim 10-20 (canceled)

21. (previously presented) The staple oligonucleotide according to claim 1, which is represented by the structural formula:

